

CLAIMS

1. A method of facilitating interactive communication between clients providing services and/or products and prospective users thereof, the method comprising:
5 providing access to a database of at least one client's user interest data on a network; permitting network access to the user interest data by a user via a remote interface; receiving a selection by the user of the client's user interest data; receiving entry by the user of user-specific data; providing access to processing software which processes the user-specific data and the
10 selected user interest data to produce response data, and providing at least one recipient nominated by the client with access to equipment which automatically exports the response data.

2. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, the method further comprising:
establishing and/or maintaining the database.

3. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, the method further comprising:
processing the user-specific data and the selected user interest data to produce the response data..

4. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, the method further comprising:
25 automatically exporting the response data to the at least one recipient.

5. Signalling apparatus according to claim 2, wherein a client-specific identifier for each client is stored in the database.

6. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 5, wherein the database comprises at least one of: a web server database, a subscriber database, an open user group database, and a closed user group database.

5 7. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, wherein the user-interest data requires or elicits a user-specific response from the user.

8. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, wherein the user-interest data comprise at least one of: product information and service information.

10 9. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, wherein the user-interest data comprise information relating to the client's users and potential users.

10. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, wherein the interface is a user interface.

11. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 10, wherein the user interface is at least one of: a command interface, a graphic user interface (GUI), a web browser front-ending the graphic user interface of a personal computer, an interactive digital television, an application program interface.

12. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, wherein the user-specific data comprise at least one of contact details, a message, instructions, or details of an event.

25 13. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, wherein the response data is exported via at least one of the telephone, GSM, SMS, TTY, email and ICQ.

14. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, wherein the response data is directed to a third party.

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15. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, further comprising at least one of screening, filtering and monitoring the user-specific data.

16. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, wherein the 5 user-specific data comprises a phone number.

17. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 16, wherein the phone number is exported to a third party.

10 18. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, further comprising utilising a computer system associated with the user to notify the database of an event.

19. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 1, further comprising assigning the user a unique identifier upon a first receipt of user-specific data.

20. A method of facilitating interactive communication as claimed in claim 19, wherein the identifier is sent back to the user as a cookie.

20 21. A signalling apparatus for facilitating interactive communication between clients providing services and/or products and prospective users thereof, the signalling apparatus comprising:
a database of at least one client's user interest data on a network;
a remote interface permitting network access to the user interest data by a user, selection 25 by the user of a client's user interest data and entry by the user of user-specific data;
processing software which merges the user-specific data and the selected user interest data to produce response data; and
a response module which automatically exports the response data to at least one recipient nominated by the client.

22. A signalling apparatus as claimed in claim 21, wherein the response module comprises a switch.

23. A method for a user to interactively communicate with a client providing services and/or products, the method comprising:

5 accessing a database of at least one client's user interest data on a network via a remote interface;

10 selecting user interest data and entering user-specific data whereby processing software is accessed which processes the user-specific data and the selected user interest data to produce response data which is then automatically exported to at least one recipient nominated by the client, and

15 communicating with the at least one recipient.

24. A document validation method comprising the steps of providing software on the network to users thereof, the software providing an encrypted key on documents provided by the user, the encrypted key comprising user-specific data and each key being encrypted by the document whereby tampering is evident, and enabling the same or another user to receive such documents and determine the identity of the sender from the user-specific data.

25. A method of validating the transmission of an electronic document over a network between users thereof, the method comprising:

20 providing access to a database of user-specific data on the network;

 permitting access by a user to the database via a remote interface whereby the user may transmit an electronic document to a recipient nominated by the user;

25 receiving entry by the user of user-specific data;

 encrypting the user-specific data;

 providing access to processing software which processes the encrypted user-specific data and data corresponding to the electronic document to produce encrypted document-specific transmission data, and

30 providing the recipient with access to equipment which automatically exports the transmission data.

26. A method of validating the transmission of an electronic document as claimed in claim 25, the method further comprising:

processing the encrypted user-specific data and data corresponding to the electronic document to produce encrypted document-specific transmission data.

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27. A method of validating the transmission of an electronic document as claimed in claim 25, the method further comprising:

automatically exporting the transmission data over the network to the recipient nominated by the user.

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28. A method of validating the transmission of a document as claimed in claim 25, wherein upon receipt by the recipient of the exported transmission data it is evident if the document has been tampered with.

29. A method of validating the transmission of a document as claimed in claim 25, wherein upon receipt by the recipient of the exported transmission data the identity of the user transmitting the document is evident.

30. A method of validating the transmission of a document as claimed in claim 25, wherein upon receipt by the recipient of the exported transmission data the user transmitting the document is automatically alerted if it is evident that the document has been tampered with.